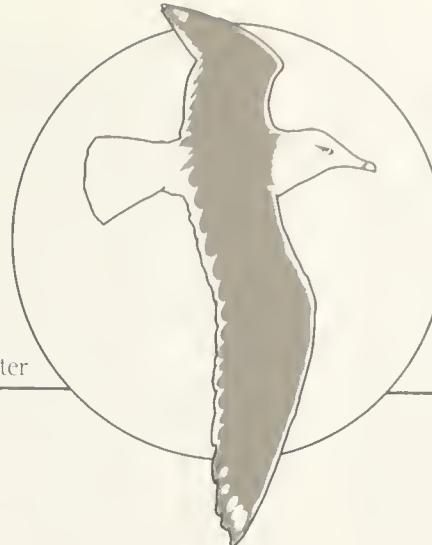


The Gull

Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 85 No. 3 March 2001



Mar 31 2001

Annual Report

Our Golden Gate Audubon Society fiscal year is June 1 to May 31 and each January or February we like to report to you what we did during that year. So here it is for the first year of the new millennium (or not depending on your definition of the year 2000). As usual, we have been pretty darn busy trying to do good things for the wild creatures with whom we share our world. We've helped several endangered species, we strive to save wildlife habitat and even to restore it, we help our young children understand that there is such a thing as nature, even in our highly urbanized environment, and we bring recreational joy to thousands of adults through our field trips and nature programs. Read on for the details of some of what we are doing.

2000 Annual Report of the Golden Gate Audubon Society

(This Report is available to the general public.)

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, established in 1917 and incorporated in 1952, is one of the oldest conservation organizations in the Bay Area as well as on the entire West Coast.

We serve the citizens and the wildlife of San Francisco, Alameda, Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, Piedmont, Richmond, Pt. Richmond, Albany, El Cerrito, El Sobrante, Kensington, San Pablo, Moraga and Orinda.

Our organization is dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of the Bay Area's natural resources, particularly its wildlife. To accomplish this goal we are

active in the areas of education, research, advocacy and recreation.

This year, as usual, we have been pretty darn busy trying to do good things for the wild creatures with whom we share our world. We've helped several endangered species. We strove to save wildlife habitat and even to restore it. We helped our young children understand that there is such a thing as nature, even in our highly urbanized environment, and we brought recreational joy to thousands of adults through our field trips and nature programs. Read on for the details of some of what we are doing.

Recreation:

This year we took over one thousand people on field trips to sites all around the Bay Area, the State and even internationally with our Panama Field Trip. These trips bring increased awareness and appreciation of our wildlife resources and their increasingly threatened status.

International Efforts:

Our Panama Field Trip reflects our ever-increasing international involvement through our Latin America Committee. We are helping Panama Audubon with a project to help educate its citizenry about its beautiful but rapidly disappearing Harpy Eagle. We are working closely with Grupo Ecologico de Sierra Gordo, a Mexican environmental organization working to defend Mexico's forests. We are also starting a pen pal program between the grade school students we work with in Oakland and students in Latin America.

Continues on page 2

Local Conservation Initiatives:

The endangered California Least Tern

nests on the former Alameda Naval Air Station. Through the efforts of Golden Gate Audubon, a National Wildlife Refuge will be established on this site in order to protect this endangered species and the over 100 bird and small mammal species that also inhabit this area. However, until the US Navy transfers the land to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in order to create the Refuge, there really isn't anyone looking out for the well-being of these critters.

Thus, two years ago the Least Terns had a disastrous nesting season because people were tramping around their nest site and disturbing them. Recognizing this threat, this year the Golden Gate Audubon Society asked both the Navy and the Fish and Wildlife Service to put an adequate fence around the to-be Refuge lands. Each agency said the other agency was responsible and nothing happened.

Fearing disaster, we started a letter writing campaign to our Congresspersons and we threatened to sue the Navy and the Service for failure to protect an endangered species. This two-pronged approach was successful and the two agencies erected a satisfactory fence to protect the Refuge site. As a result, this year the Least Terns had a banner breeding season, one of the best ever!

The California Quail

our State Bird, was once common in San Francisco. Now it is nearly gone. The Golden Gate Audubon society has dedicated itself to preserving the Quail in San Francisco and we have established a "Save the Quail" Campaign. As part of that Campaign we will be leading the effort to restore Quail habitat in City parks such as Golden Gate Park, McLaren Park, and in the Presidio and at Fort Funston. We have already held a successful planting effort that involved over 20 volunteers and, working with professional wildlife biologists, we will develop a comprehensive restoration plan for the Quail. Through our efforts, San Francisco's

Commission on the Environment has adopted a resolution endorsing our Save the Quail Campaign and it has also recommended making the Quail the official City Bird of San Francisco.

The Bank Swallow colony that nests in the sandy dune-cliffs of San Francisco's Fort Funston is one of only two such colonies in all of California. Once plentiful on the coast, human intrusion onto beaches has made life difficult for them and now they reside mostly in the interior of the state. For that reason, the Bank Swallow is listed as a Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Game and, as such, requires extra levels of protection. Fort Funston is a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and as a National Park a large part of its mission is to protect wildlife species. Over the past few years there has been an increasing use of the park by dog owners wanting to run their dogs unleashed. The result has been degradation of native plants and an erosion of the dunes. Lately the Bank Swallow colony has been decreasing in size and this may be the result of human and dog impacts.

To alleviate this situation, the GGNRA proposed closing 10 or so acres of cliffs at Fort Funston in order to allow for native vegetation restoration and to help our the Bank Swallows. Irate dog walkers sued GGNRA to force the site to remain open. We at GGAS agreed with GGNRA that such steps needed to be taken and we engaged a well-known environmental lawyer (Larry Silver) and "intervened" (i.e., joined in the lawsuit) in support of GGNRA.

The result of this litigation was that the judge required the GGNRA to publish their closure decision in the federal register, but made it clear that GGNRA had the right to enact its closure and restoration plans.

Other efforts:

Heron's Head Park in San Francisco was dedicated this year. This park, located in the Bayview community, is the site of a wonderful wetland restoration project that was in great

part initiated by GGAS.

In the Clinton Basin portion of the Oakland Estuary, the Port of Oakland accidentally caused an oil leak into Bay waters when it attempted to remove an abandoned boat from the Estuary. The San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board is imposing a fine on the Port and we are working with the Port and the Regional Board so that part of the fine money can be spent on restoring Clinton Basin. The Basin is the only section of the estuary that does not have a concrete edge and it is home to a large numbers of waders (egrets and herons), ducks (including the rare Barrows Goldeneye), and many shorebirds.

We continued our efforts to preserve the Gateway Valley in Orinda from development. This 980-acre near-pristine valley has over 5 miles of streams and over 7 acres of rare wetland seeps and pools. It hosts over 70 wildlife species including two threatened or endangered species. Over thirty bird species nest in Gateway Valley.

Education:

GGAS has dedicated itself to providing innovative environmental education programs to our local communities that are most in need of such programs.

We have just completed the second year of our docent education program based on the Alameda National Wildlife Refuge. In this program, our Audubon volunteer docents go into Alameda City classrooms with a slide presentation and a set of other activities (such activities include: food web bingo; a bird call station; a woodblock food pyramid; a food chain map of the Refuge; etc.). In addition, 4th /5th-grade classes are taken on a field trip onto the future Alameda National Wildlife Refuge grounds. We also trained 30 high school students to be docents and they went into over 100 classrooms with our adult volunteers. The grade-schoolers love having the high school students teach them and the high school students get great career training experiences. It also helps teach

the high schoolers punctuality and dependability, skills that are essential in the adult job market world. This is a very successful effort and much appreciated by the high school students who also attend at least one after-school docent work session in which we analyze the success of the program.

Another GGAS education program takes place in Oakland at the MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline Park in San Leandro Bay. In this program we train teachers, parents and high school students in the ecology of the wetlands and mudflats in this park. We then make a classroom presentation and follow that up with a field trip to the park. GGAS pays for the bus for each class to ensure that the kids can get there. Recent research by GGAS staff has shown that many low-income community classes never get to nature preserves because of a lack of funding for transportation. Our program provides that needed funding in addition to the educational component. We served over 20 grade school classes with this very intensive program.

Restoration and monitoring:

In 1986 the Golden Gate Audubon

Society initiated a lawsuit against the Port of Oakland and the Army Corps of Engineers in order to save hundreds of acres of wetlands from destruction. That suit was finally settled and most of the wetlands were saved. In 1995 the Port and Golden Gate Audubon started the planning process to restore 71.5 acres of wetlands at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline Park in San Leandro Bay as compensation for those wetlands that were destroyed. In June of 1998 the initial restoration work was completed. As part of the restoration process we have organized and implemented a scientific monitoring program on the avian usage of the restored wetlands. This is part of a 5-year monitoring program that will help scientists' design future wetland restoration projects. Over 35 Audubon volunteers help in this bird census.

CALFED is a state and federal agency effort to resolve California's water problems. How to provide enough fresh water for both the human and wildlife inhabitants of our state is a question that has yet to be answered. Our Executive Director has been working on this issue for years and continues to go to countless meetings to help everyone reach

a satisfactory conclusion to this problem.

Over 180 volunteers take part in our Audubon Armchair Activist Program through which they write monthly letters on issues of concern to the natural world. Through these advocacy efforts we have helped educate regulatory agencies and civic leaders on environmental issues.

To accomplish all these goals required a budget of \$232,000 and several thousand hours of volunteer and staff effort. Well over 250 volunteers assist us in our activities. We continue to search for additional funding to enable us to better meet our constantly increasing needs. Additional information may be obtained by calling our office at 510-843-2222.

Our Board of Directors will be found on the following pages. The Executive Director of Golden Gate Audubon Society is Arthur Feinstein. Our Administrative Assistant is Kathryn Blake. Our Program Director for our East Bay efforts is Dana Kokubun and our Education Coordinator is Amy Mayeno.

Arthur Feinstein
Executive Director

Help Us Host at ACR

March and April may be the cruelest months for some, but not for the Egrets and Great Blue Herons at Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) and certainly not for you when you act as a host at ACR.

What is ACR? Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) is an organization that now operates three sanctuaries in the North Bay; two in Marin and one in Sonoma County. It was formed when a group of people heard that there was a plan to create a new residential community in Bolinas Lagoon. The Golden Gate, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies stepped in and

joined with local folks in defeating that development proposal.

Well, here's your excuse to get away for a day and experience nature. Become an ACR host. Each year from mid-March to mid-July the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve is open weekends to all visitors. The Bolinas Lagoon Preserve gets thousands of visitors each year and we need volunteers to help direct the visitors to the trails, the birds, the nature museum, the bookstore and of course, the bathrooms.

It's a lot of fun. ACR will send you all the information you need so that you will be well informed when peo-

ple ask you questions about the birds. You'll meet interesting people and provide a real service to ACR. And you get to see the birds and the redwoods yourself (we have enough hosts each weekend day so that everyone gets time to go off for a walk to enjoy the preserve). You will be hosting with fellow GGAS members who are a very enjoyable bunch of people. After all, you are one.

Our hosting days are March 25, April 7, 8, and 28, May 13, 19, 26 and 27, June 30, and July 1 and 8. So please call our ACR-Host volunteer coordinator Bill Hering at 415-865-3625 and sign up for spring day at ACR's Bolinas Lagoon Preserve. Call Bill and select a date you can make and have a great time. We look forward to seeing you there.

2000 Oakland Christmas Bird Count Results

—By Clyde Morris & Joelle Buffa, Co-compilers

It was another wonderful warm and clear day for the 61st Oakland Christmas Bird Count with calm winds and seas. What's that make it? Two years in a row without rain or snow? This year we had lots of birding buddies to enjoy it with: 186 observers, an increase of 29 over last year. Yes! It was a fine way to spend the nation's 101st Christmas Bird Count. Let's continue the positive trend **next year when we hold the count on Sunday, December 16, 2001.**

Like most years when we totaled all those birds you counted, we had some highs and lows with a few continuing trends to note. The good news is bird numbers are up again, with total individuals counted exceeding one hundred thousand for the second time in six years. We recorded the second highest number of birds (103,876) since 1995. The number of species seen (182) was the highest total since 1974 when we had 188 species. Of course in 1974 there were 296 participants and 232,661 individual birds counted so our 182 species was pretty darn good considering. Think how many we could have found if we had that many participants again! Sixty-one years of past Oakland CBC data is available on-line at <HTTP://WWW.BIRD-SOURCE.ORG>. Check it out!

We had plenty of species seen that are rare to the Oakland Count: Bob Hirt's group on the Emeryville Shoreline found 4 **surfbirds** which had only been seen on one other count before. Rusty Scalf's **American redstart** on Bay Farm Island was only the second year that species had ever been seen. Oddly enough, the other count it was seen on was last year when Rusty recorded it in the exact same tree as he found it this year! **Northern pygmy owls** were seen/ heard for the first time since 1984. The **pileated woodpecker** Johan Langewis heard during count week near the

Skyline entrance to Redwood Park was only the second record since 1974. Other interesting sightings included 5 **swans** (probably tundra swans) seen over the Dunsmuir Area where Luke Cole's group also recorded 2 **Nashville warblers**. Paul Jones' gang on the South Boat on San Francisco Bay saw 10 **brant**; more than had ever been seen on the count before. Five **Ross' geese** documented by Joanna Kennedy at Crab Cove in Alameda was also the highest number ever seen. Two **long-tailed ducks** (used to be called Old Squaw) were seen by George Peyton from the North Boat and Steve Granholm from near the Berkeley Pier. A female **tufted duck** was seen again this year on Lake Merritt by Neil Whitehouse & Lina Prairie. A **lesser yellowlegs** was seen by Bob Urvang's group on the Oakland Airport. Lillian Fujii and Steve Hayashi's group in Berkeley were busy with a **Selasphorus hummingbird** seen in the same area they recorded a **rufous hummingbird** last year, and **black-throated gray and hermit warblers**. Phil Maynard found a **blue-gray gnatcatcher** at Lafayette for the second year in a row. John Luther and Kay Loughman had **Cassin's finch** coming to feeders in their yards.

We had **record high** numbers for many species this year (averages are based on 27 year period 1974–2000): **turkey vulture** (242 counted; average=147), **cinnamon teal** (82; average=31), **black-necked stilt** (248; average=96), **greater yellowlegs** (79; average=30), and **Hutton's vireo** (79; average=44). Any good way to keep from double-counting raptors such as turkey vultures besides the rather invalid method of ending the count of these species at noon?

For lowlights, **long-billed dowitcher** was missed for the second time in 26 years (1st time was

last year). Rock wren was missed for only the fourth time in 27 years, mainly because the Regional Parks were doing construction in the "regular" spot for them at Sibley Park. Record lows were recorded for the following species: pelagic cormorant (2), great blue heron (26), red-breasted merganser (27), white-tailed kite (2), American kestral (32), black-bellied plover (402), killdeer (97), ruddy turnstone (2), white-crowned sparrows (927), golden-crowned sparrow (843), and dark-eyed junco (1039).

Interesting trends continued this year. Three **bald eagles** was the highest number ever seen on the count and continued the positive trend of being present 6 out of the past 7 years when they had only been seen three times before that since 1939. Twenty-eight **red-shouldered hawks** also continued their expansion in the Oakland area with double digits being seen every year since 1994; single digits from 1982 to 1994 and hardly seen at all before 1982. **Starlings** seem to be maintaining a smaller presence averaging below 3,000 since 1988 after hitting high numbers of between 10,000 and 20,000 in the mid 1970s to early 1980s. On the other hand, some trends are not always positive. Again this year the **raven** populations exploded setting another record (131) topping last year's record (101). This continues an upward trend since 1990 when they had maintained fewer than ten per year from 1975 to 1990 and had been recorded only twice from 1936 to 1975. Their increase may be due to food and habitat being made available by humans. Increases in ravens are a concern because they prey on endangered species such as **snowy plovers and least terns**.

Thanks to the faithful area leaders new and old. Consistency and knowledge of the areas produce the best results so we hope our new leaders will continue to lead for many more

years. Thanks to Art and Katherine at the GGAS office for their support. We are grateful to Ann Howard for arranging the Countdown Dinner, William Giddens for the catered meal, and Diane Ahlgren for collecting money at the door. We appreciate the

work of the Rare Bird Committee: John Luther and Luke Cole and the backup rare bird committee of Helen Green and John Robinson who evaluated the rare bird sighting write-ups submitted by John and Luke. And finally, a big round of applause to all

who participated in the count and shared their great stories at the count dinner. We hope to see you all next year on **Sunday, December 16, 2001!**

20	Red-throated Loon
CW	Pacific Loon
22	Common Loon
1	loon, sp
247	Pied-billed Grebe
154	Horned Grebe
121	Eared Grebe
219	Western Grebe
101	Clark's Grebe
407	Aechmophorus, sp
15	Ame. White Pelican
63	Brown Pelican
14	Brandt's Cormorant
1049	Double-crest. Corm
2	Pelagic Cormorant
26	Great Blue Heron
54	Great Egret
105	Snowy Egret
1	Cattle Egret
4	Green Heron
88	Black-cr. N-Heron
242	Turkey Vulture
2	Great Wht-f. Goose
1	Snow Goose
5	Ross's Goose
1493	Canada Goose
1	Canada G. (small)
10	(Black) Brant
50	goose, sp
5	swan, sp
11	Wood Duck
91	Gadwall
1	Eurasian Wigeon
586	American Wigeon
1455	Mallard
3	Blue-winged Teal
82	Cinnamon Teal
429	Northern Shoveler
159	Northern Pintail
85	Green-winged Teal
947	Canvasback
33	Redhead
104	Ring-necked Duck
1	Tufted Duck
3978	Greater Scaup
1036	Lesser Scaup
12927	scaup, sp
9606	Surf Scoter
13	White-winged Scot.
2	Long-tailed Duck
2418	Bufflehead
619	Common Goldeneye
41	Barrow's Goldeneye
2	Hooded Merganser
88	Common Merganser

27	Red-breasted Merg.
4487	Ruddy Duck
184	duck, sp
4	Osprey
2	White-tailed Kite
3	Bald Eagle
2	adult(s)
1	immature(s)
23	Northern Harrier
16	Sharp-shinned Hawk
17	Cooper's Hawk
5	Accipiter, sp
28	Red-shouldered Ha.
203	Red-tailed Hawk
2	Buteo, sp
5	Golden Eagle
4	adult(s)
1	immature(s)
32	American Kestrel
4	Merlin
3	Peregrine Falcon
CW	Ring-nec. Pheasant
66	California Quail
3	Clapper Rail
3	Virginia Rail
3	Sora
2374	American Coot
402	Black-bellied Plo.
10	Snowy Plover
101	Semipalmated Plo.
97	Killdeer
3	Bla. Oystercatcher
248	Black-necked Stilt
752	American Avocet
79	Greater Yellowlegs
1	Lesser Yellowlegs
1268	Willet
16	Spotted Sandpiper
5	Whimbrel
83	Long-billed Curlew
1005	Marbled Godwit
2	Ruddy Turnstone
38	Black Turnstone
4	Surfbird
58	Red Knot
502	Sanderling
6746	Western Sandpiper
449	Least Sandpiper
4173	Dunlin
3551	peep, sp
170	Short-billed Dowi.
419	dowitcher, sp
2	Common Snipe
6	Bonaparte's Gull
10	Heermann's Gull
134	Mew Gull
2426	Ring-billed Gull
717	California Gull
24	Herring Gull
2	Thayer's Gull
2134	Western Gull
6	West.XGlauc.-w. Gul
347	Glaucous-wing Gull
4886	gull, sp
325	Forster's Tern
2189	Rock Dove
211	Band-tailed Pigeon
887	Mourning Dove
1	Barn Owl
8	West. Screech-Owl
40	Great Horned Owl
1	Northern Pygmy-Owl
5	Burrowing Owl
6	Nort. Saw-whet Owl
10	White-throa. Swift
557	Anna's Hummingbird
3	Selasphorus, sp
19	Belted Kingfisher
31	Acorn Woodpecker
14	Red-bre. Sapsucker
66	Nuttal. Woodpecker
18	Downy Woodpecker
12	Hairy Woodpecker
1	N. (Yello-shafted) Flicker
146	N. (Red-shafted) Flicker
37	Northern Flicker
1	Northern (Yel-sh. X Red-sh.) Flicker
CW	Pileat. Woodpecker
131	Black Phoebe
11	Say's Phoebe
4	Loggerhead Shrike
72	Hutton's Vireo
318	Steller's Jay
523	Western Scrub-Jay
167	American Crow
131	Common Raven
1218	Ches.-b. Chickadee
320	Oak Titmouse
1410	Bushtit
118	Red-brea. Nuthatch
24	White-br. Nuthatch
65	Pygmy Nuthatch
62	Brown Creeper
127	Bewick's Wren
56	Winter Wren
19	Marsh Wren
306	Golden-cr. Kinglet
716	Ruby-cr. Kinglet
1	Blue-g. Gnatcatcher
135	Western Bluebird
109	Hermit Thrush
3501	American Robin
52	Varied Thrush
201	Wrentit
26	North. Mockingbird
14	Califor. Thrasher
2222	European Starling
25	American Pipit
818	Cedar Waxwing
5	Orange-cr. Warbler
2	Nashville Warbler
45	Y-R Myrtle Warbler
283	Y-R Audubo Warbler
768	Yellow-R. Warbler
1	Black-throated Gray Warbler
72	Townsend's Warbler
1	Hermit Warbler
1	American Redstart
8	Comm. Yellowthroat
219	Spotted Towhee
479	California Towhee
20	Rufous-cr. Sparrow
42	Savannah Sparrow
139	Fox Sparrow
265	Song Sparrow
6	Lincoln's Sparrow
2	White-thr. Sparrow
927	White-cro. Sparrow
843	Golden-cr. Sparrow
1059	D-E (Oregon) Junco
641	Red-win. Blackbird
50	Tricolo. Blackbird
534	Western Meadowlark
597	Brewer's Blackbird
31	Brown-hea. Cowbird
44	blackbird, sp
38	Purple Finch
CW	Cassin's Finch
846	House Finch
322	Pine Siskin
519	Lesser Goldfinch
155	American Goldfinch
270	House Sparrow
103874	Individuals
182	Cumulative Species
171	Observers in field
15	Observers feeders
67	Parties
545.8	Total Party Hours
585.8	Total Party Miles

CW = count week only



Field Trips Calendar

Sunday, March 4, STRYBING ARBORETUM.

See April trip for details. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Sunday, March 11, REDWOOD REGIONAL PARK.

See February Gull for details. Leader: Anthony Fisher (510) 531-4225. Loveisant@aol.com

Wednesday, March 14, MINI-TRIP TO MITCHELL CANYON.

See February Gull for details. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301 & Jean-Marie Spoelman.

Sunday, March 18, BODEGA BAY

Meet at 9 a.m. at the corner of Eastshore and Hwy. 1, about 1 mile north of Diekmann's Store. We will begin by birding the rich Bodega Harbor area and Bodega Head, covering as many spots as time and the birds permit. No particular ending time, but bring lunch. Rain cancels. Beginners welcome. Leader: Nancy Conzett (707) 875-2231.

Saturday, March 24, SAN FRANCISCO BIRD BLITZ.

In this annual blitz we expect to tally over 100 different species within the City limits. On this year's mad dash, we look to exceed all previous records, and will begin at 7 a.m. sharp. Meet at the north end of Van Ness Ave. (past North Point - the last cross street) at the foot of Municipal Pier. From there we will caravan to other sites including Golden Gate Park, Sutro Baths, Lake Merced and Candlestick Point. Bring lunch and liquids. We will bird until dusk, then adjourn to a restaurant for dinner to recap the day's observations. Leader: Alan Hopkins (415) 664-0983 (*)

Sunday, April 1, STRYBING ARBORETUM.

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. The Strybing

Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-3241.

Saturday, April 7, GARIN PARK, HAYWARD.

Meet at 8 a.m. in the left parking lot for this 3-4 hour walk through riparian and grassland habitat. Take the Industrial Blvd. exit off of 880, head east (toward the hills). Turn right on Mission and take the first left on Garin to the top of the hill. Could be muddy. Leader: Anthony Fisher (510) 658-8769. loveisant@aol.com. \$ (parking).

Wednesday, April 11, MINI-TRIP TO SUNOL REGIONAL PARK.

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the ranger station parking lot inside the park near the green barn. Take Hwy. 680 south, about eight miles beyond the intersection of Hwy. 580. Exit at Calaveras Rd., go left (south) and follow the signs to Sunol Regional Park, about 5 miles. We may see Lark Sparrows, Golden Eagles, Bullock's Orioles, plus resident birds of the area. Bring lunch. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 351-9301, and Jean-Marie Spoelman \$ (*)

Saturday, April 14, BREEDING BIRDS OF SAN FRANCISCO.

Most of our summer breeding species will be in residence. Many male birds will be singing or displaying. Some hummingbirds will be on their second broods. There'll be a few lingering winter residents (like wigeon and scoter) but expect the Northern Mockingbird, White-crowned Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Hooded Oriole, Marsh Wren, Barn Swallow, Common Raven and many other summer species to be territorial and vocal. We'll study where each species nests and some nest types. Meet at 8:30 a.m. in the Land's End parking lot on Merrie Way just east of the Cliff House. Trip will end at noon. Leader: Harry Fuller (415) 668-8229, harry_fuller@zd.com. (*)

Friday-Sunday, June 1-3, YOSEMITE'S BIRD LIFE.

The lower and middle elevations of Yosemite National Park are alive with singing birds in early June. A variety of habitats supports a rich diversity of bird life, typically including seven flycatchers (four Empidonax), three vireos, seven warblers, and many other species in full song and breeding plumage. Our meeting place is the large parking lot 100 yards inside the Hwy. 120 (Big Oak Flat) entrance to the Park, which is 30 miles from Yosemite Valley. Meet there on Friday, June 1, at 3 p.m., and at 7 a.m. on Saturday, June 2, and Sunday, June 3. On Friday afternoon we will bird for a couple of hours and perhaps look for owls later. On Saturday we will bird all day and look for owls in the evening. (If you arrive later Saturday morning, meet the group in Hodgdon Meadow, below the Hodgdon Meadow Group Campsites.) On Sunday we will bird until about 3 p.m. Nearby campgrounds include Hodgdon Meadow and Crane Flat in the Park (reservations required — (800) 456-7275), and Forest Service campgrounds Diamond O on Evergreen Road (the road to Hetch Hetchy), and Sweetwater on Hwy. 120. Lodging on or near Hwy. 120 includes Sugar Pine Ranch (209) 962-7823, Yosemite Westgate Motel (209) 962-5281, Evergreen Lodge (209) 379-2606, Lee's Middle Fork (209) 962-7408, and Buck Meadows Lodge (209) 962-5281. Bring warm clothes, rainwear, rubber boots (wet meadows) and a large flashlight for owling. Bring a lunch and be prepared to walk about six miles on Saturday. Leaders: Dave Quady (510) 704-9353 and Bob Lewis. \$ (*)

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (*).

Problems, etc.: If you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, or **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAD A TRIP**, call Anthony Fisher, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 658-8769. Loveisant@aol.com.

Donations

Golden Eagle (\$1,000 or more)

Jacqueline Smalley and John Austin

Peregrine Falcon (\$500 or more)

Danan and Steven Sherman
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Leach
Beryl Ness

Least Tern (\$200 or more)

Pamela and Albert Bendich
Janetta and John Dang
Susan S. Briggs with match from The Flora Family Foundation
Shelia and Laurence Malone

Clapper Rail (\$100 or more)

Hortensia Chang and John Nelson
Susan and Ron Briggs, for the Least Terns
Elizabeth Hook
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In Memorium

Ken Ackerman, Erika Schuster and Clay Biberdorf, Coralee and Michael McDermott, Joan and Dan Murphy, Janet Wessel, Anna Wilcox, Jean Marie Spellman, Margaret, Mary Louise and Harold Rosegay, Joan Keller and Jane and Michael Larkin in memory of **Mary Louise Rosegay**. Janet and Jim Leibek in memory of **Caroline and Don Plant**.

A bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society helps make it possible for us to continue the good work we do in helping to preserve our natural world for future generations. If you are interested in setting up a bequest we have a team of experts who will be glad to help you. Please call Arthur Feinstein at our GGAS Office for more information. Our phone number is 510-843-2222. Thanks.

East Bay Spring Shorebird Field Class

Shorebirds come in three basic plumages: winter or basic, breeding or alternate, and juvenal. In between, the birds are in molt, offering even more challenges. Golden Gate Audubon is offering a shorebird class this spring featuring shorebirds in breeding or molting into breeding plumage. The class will be a half day field class at a convenient East Bay location(s), on Saturday, April 7, 2001 (rain cancels; subject to rescheduling at the instructor's option). Our instructor is experienced birder Stephen Davies, who will emphasize shorebird ID, but may also cover aspects of various birds' natural history, such as abundance, distribution and habitat requirements. Class size will be limited to 15 to allow for personal attention. Cost is \$10.00, to be paid the day of the class, checks to be made payable to Golden Gate Audubon Society. To sign up, e-mail Stephen at sdavies@cgl.ucsf.edu (preferred), or call (415) 776-6321 (Stephen may not be home, but leave a message and he will return your call). Further details and instructions will be provided to participants before the day of the class.

Supreme Court Puts All Migratory Waterbirds At Risk

In a disastrous and very controversial 5 to 4 decision, the federal Supreme Court has ruled that the federal government should no longer protect our migratory waterbirds.

If you've read the Gull over the last ten years, you will know that our Bay Area seasonal wetlands, Central Valley vernal pools and Central Plains prairie potholes are all very important to waterbirds. Our seasonal wetlands provide essential habitat to a million migratory shorebirds and 500,000 waterfowl every year. Our vernal pools also provide such habitat and the Central Plains prairie potholes provide the essential nursery grounds to the many millions of ducks that are found in the Central Migratory Flyway.

These wetlands are critical to migratory birds and have been protected from destruction by agriculture and development for the last twenty years by the Clean Water Act and the Army Corps of Engineers that held that the use of these wetlands by migratory birds made these waters of national importance and thus worthy of federal protection.

Disastrously, the Supreme Court in a most outrageous decision has recently decided that despite the use of these waters by migratory birds, and thus their clear interstate importance, such seasonal wetlands should not be regulated by the federal government.

It's the height of irony, with a good dose of tragedy thrown in. On the same day that the federal govern-

ment releases the great news that the rate of loss of our nation's wetlands has been reduced by 80%, the U.S. Supreme Court overturns the very rules that made possible that reduction in wetland destruction. The fact that our nation has already lost well over 50% of our historic wetlands should indicate to us all that we are losing wetlands at a pretty good clip.

Should we care? Darn tooting we should. Wetland vegetation cleans up our water by taking out contaminants. Our seasonal wetlands (the ones the Supreme Court has now opened up to destruction) also help reduce flooding by collecting rainwater, thus acting as natural detention basins.

Seasonal wetlands also provide a home and nursery to millions of ducks, geese and shorebirds. While we humans may be faced with increased costs for water quality and for repairing flood damage due to the loss of wetlands, that's just money. For the water birds it's life and, now, death.

If you've ever thrived to the beauty of a wood duck or mallard, if your children have had their life enriched by feeding ducks, you know what a joy it is to have critters such as these to enjoy. Well, enjoy it now. If our wetlands start to disappear at their historic rates there will soon be no home for these wonderful critters and our world will be a whole lot emptier.

What can we do? Well, you can write an indignant letter to Justice Rehnquist and ask him why he reversed a regulation that has existed

for 15 years and which Congress had many opportunities to change if they had so desired. You can also write your Congressional Representative and Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer and ask that they try to correct this tragic event. You can also write to President Bush and ask him also to correct this situation by passing new laws that once again give the federal government the jurisdiction to protect our irreplaceable and invaluable seasonal wetlands, vernal pools, and prairie potholes. Please Write.

The address for your Representative is:

Honorable _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

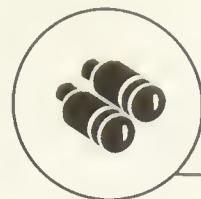
For our Senators:

Senator _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

For the President:

President George W. Bush,
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Supreme Court:
Chief Justice Rehnquist
One First Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20543



Birds Of A Feather

There has been a whole lot of screaming going on in my neighborhood. Living on a ridge affords me a glimpse of hawk courtship from below as well as from above. Throughout the day the air is punctuated with extremely insistent calls which even I, a human, cannot ignore. Imagine if you were a female hawk (Cooper's, Sharp-shinned or Red-shouldered) or one of the loud-mouthed males' rivals for territory and breeding rights. It's obviously time to proclaim your presence, if you're a hawk.

Courtship and pair bonding among birds is varied—so much so that there have been many in-depth studies done and reams of material written on the subject. Anyone who "watches" birds feels fortunate to witness some of these fascinating displays.

Raptors exhibit some of the most thrilling aerial displays. On a crystal clear day, with the birds' aerobatics silhouetted against a brilliant blue sky, you will be challenged to try to describe it in mere words. But you won't forget the spectacle. My all-time favorite was a pair of White-tailed Kites with locked talons who were "helicoptering" from on high. What a picture! They spun clock-wise as they tumbled towards a cherry

orchard in bloom. They pulled out of their dive at the last moment before repeating the exciting maneuver.

For years I've enjoyed watching courtship among Red-tailed Hawks above the rolling green hills. A pair usually circles together, talons extended for the occasional brief joining of claws in mid-air. One pair forgot to release and tumbled to a grassy slope where they picked themselves up with apparent embarrassment. Sometimes they play tag and a chase ensues. I've also seen the male offer the female food (a snake) while on the wing. There is also vocal communication between them, a series of raspy screams or the usual "cherrrr". Although they are our most common hawk, Red-tails have so many different "looks" and such varied manners of flying, they are a favorite of mine.

Then, a couple of years ago the Red-shouldered Hawks moved into the area. I had enjoyed spotting them on our drives to Bodega Bay, characteristically hunched overhead on a telephone wire, heads down while looking for prey. They showed up one year and have found a niche in my own home town. Red-shouldered hawks are very talkative, raucous even! So you can't ignore them as they zoom by, skimming the oak treetops below my deck. I never tire of their stunning rusty colored breasts, black and white banded tail and translucent white crescent across their wingtips. Their courtship seems to consist of a lot of talking while perched or as they circle the sky together.

We also have a pair of Cooper's Hawks who are nearly as communicative as the Red-shouldered Hawks. They seem to be having trou-

ble recognizing that they could become a couple. Now they act like rivals and appear to be attacking one another as if defending a territory. It is not uncommon for courtship to begin this way between birds, especially if they are more solitary than flock-oriented. It makes for some spirited flurries of parry and feint, retreat, attack, then circling together. No wonder someone termed these displays a "sky dance." Later on, the Cooper's Hawks will perform a morning duet of shrill "kee-kee-kee" while they are building their nest. This concludes with mating. At least I'll know what all the shouting is about!

The Northern Harrier may seem to be an unlikely bird to exhibit one of the most intricate sky dances among the hawk species. It spends most of its flight time "quartering" its territory, flying low over marshes while hunting, stopping to hover occasionally. The harrier's dished-in owl-like face helps it to collect the sounds of scurrying mice while its keen eyesight zeroes in on a meal. But during courtship the male becomes a fighter-pilot instead of a patient cruiser of fields. In order to thrill the female, the male performs a series of huge barrel-rolls. I was duly impressed when I saw this tricky maneuver. The female harrier was perched atop a shrub and she must have liked what she saw since she was receptive to his advances.

Because I am a notoriously bad photographer, I try to take pictures in my mind's eye. I need not dig out a photo album, but merely scroll through my favorite memories. Many of them include all the excitement of an air show, raptor-style.



Northern Harrier



Observations

Dec. 30, 2000 - Jan. 29, 2001

By Collin G. Murphy, Ph.D.

Fulmars, Kittiwakes, Storm-Petrels, Shearwaters, and Phalaropes were blown in by several storms that began in mid-January and could be seen on or near the shore. There were seven review species for the CBRC, most continuing from last period, some of which obligingly stayed around for Christmas Bird Counts.

Loons to Ducks.

A **Yellow-billed Loon** (*Gavia adamsii*) off Pt. Pinos was included in the MTY Peninsula CBC on Dec. 30 and was seen until at least Jan. 15 on a Monterey Bay PT (MPRBA). Two or three Laysan Albatross were found on that same PT (MPRBA), and some Black-footed Albatross were seen from shore at Pt. Pinos, MTY, Jan. 26 (MPRBA). A Flesh-footed Shearwater was recorded on the aforementioned CBC Dec. 30 (MPRBA), and another was seen from the Moss Landing Jetty, MTY, Jan. 28 (MPRBA).

A **Greater Shearwater** (*Puffinus gravis*) was identified on a Monterey Bay PT Jan. 15 (MPRBA). This species normally ranges over the Atlantic Ocean and there are probably fewer than 5 Pacific Ocean records. We hope that this observation will be submitted to the CBRC for review.

Fairhaven, HUM, hosted a Buller's Shearwater Jan. 1 (ABB). Three or four **Manx Shearwaters** (*Puffinus puffinus*) were spotted on the MTY PT Jan. 15 (MPRBA). Two Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels could be observed close to shore off West Cliff Drive, SCZ, Jan. 12 (JG).

At least 57 Greater White-fronted Geese were found in coastal locations in MTY, SF, SCL, and SCZ counties, including 12 each in DN and HUM counties. Coastal Snow Geese were also found in good numbers, with 12 seen over ALA, CC, DN, HUM, MTY, SCL, and SCZ counties. Meanwhile, 9 single Ross's Geese were scattered over many of the same locations in ALA, CC, HUM, MTY, SCL, and SCZ

counties. The Tundra Swan reported last month continued at Laguna Creek Marsh, SCZ, until at least Jan. 16 when it was joined by another of its species (DSu, SAS).

Unusual Ducks were seen in good numbers during the period. Individual Eurasian Wigeons were found near Heron's Head, SF, Dec. 30-Jan. 22 (JAn), off Elkhorn Rd., MTY, Jan. 1 (BR), at Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, Jan. 14 (LF), at Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, Jan. 28-29 (BJ, PLT), and one or two more were at Arcata, HUM, Jan. 1-27 (ABB). A member of the Eurasian race of the Green-winged Teal was found at Palo Alto Baylands, SCL, Jan. 28 (BJ). Five single Tufted Ducks were reported: continuing at L. Merritt, ALA, Jan. 7 (MEz), near Lucerne, LAK, Jan. 7 (JW), at Bolinas Lagoon, MRN, Jan. 15 (DLSH), at L. Mendocino, MEN, Jan. 17 (GS), and at Moro Cojo Slough, Moss Landing, MTY, Jan. 28 (RFo, MPRBA, TG). The **King Eider** (*Somateria spectabilis*) first reported Dec. 23 remained at the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN, Jan. 18 (DH, DaH, DNo, MOB). A Harlequin Duck was near Wharf #2, MTY, Dec. 29-Jan. 28 (MRPBA), a second continued at the Fish Docks, PRNS, MRN, Jan. 13-15 (DQ, JK, DLSH), and a third was found at King Salmon, HUM, Jan. 19 (ABB). Even more Long-tailed Ducks were recorded than last month, when 11 were seen. The current period had at least 20 observations of this bird (aka Oldsquaw) over ALA, DN, MRN, MTY, and SCZ counties, with an amazing group of 6 recorded at SCZ at Moss Landing, MTY, Dec. 30-Jan. 21 (MPRBA, MOB). Another high count of 3 occurred at Drake's Bay, PRNS, MTY, Jan. 13 (JK). At least 90 Hooded Mergansers were recorded over DN, HUM, LAK, MRN, SF, SCL, SCZ, and SON counties.

Raptors to Skimmers.

An immature Bald Eagle was identified at Coyote Hills RP, ALA, Jan. 13

(TC). A juvenile Broad-winged Hawk was seen in Santa Cruz, SCZ, Dec. 31-Jan. 18 (JD, SGe, DSu), and possibly a second individual of that species was also in Santa Cruz on Jan. 1 (BW). A dark-morph Swainson's Hawk was at Buena Vista Rd. County Landfill, SCZ, Jan. 26 (DSu). The Rough-legged Hawk first reported Dec. 9 continued at Davenport, SCZ up until Jan. 15 (RW, JH, MOB). Several other Rough-legged Hawks were reported, mostly in HUM county, with up to 5 in Arcata, Jan. 11-27, 3 at Loleta Jan. 17, and 2 at Beatrice Jan. 24 (ABB). Still another Rough-legged Hawk added to the raptor records at Coyote Hills RP, ALA, Jan. 24-28 (BS, CD, LF).

Two Rock Sandpipers were reported: one at Garberville, HUM, Jan. 1 (ABB), and the second at Fairhaven, HUM, Jan. 14 (ABB). A Stilt Sandpiper, first reported in November, was seen at the Merced NWR, MER, Dec. 27 (PJM). A Ruff was found near the Dumbarton Bridge, ALA, Jan. 12-24 (CN, AD, MOB). Birders enjoyed several groups of Red Phalaropes that had been driven inland by Pacific storms. At least 100 were seen during the period over MRN, MTY, SF, SCL, and SCZ counties, with high counts of 25-30 at La Selva Beach, SCZ, Jan. 13 (DSu), ~30 off Drake's Beach, PRNS, MTY, Jan. 13 (JK), and 40 at the Salinas River NWR, MTY, Jan. 14 (LH). The **Lesser Black-backed Gull** (*Larus fuscus*) continued its winter stay at L. Cunningham, SCL, Jan. 1-20 (AE, MR, ST, MOB). Eleven single Glaucous Gulls were identified over HUM, MTY, SCL, and SCZ counties, and two were at the Alviso Salt Ponds, SCL, Jan. 29 (MR). The 13 Black Skimmers remained at Charleston Slough, SCL, Jan. 2-23 (BB, MR, PJM).

Doves to Wood Warblers.

A White-winged Dove flew over Pine Flat Rd., SON, Jan. 6 (DS). Woodpeckers in unusual coastal locations were a Lewis's Woodpecker in Woodside, SCL, Jan. 23-29 (PS), a

Wood Warbler Sightings

Tennessee Warbler

Jan. 13-22 L. Merced, SF PJM, JW, HC, MOB

Nashville Warbler

Dec. 30 (5) MTY MPRBA
Jan. 12 Arcata, HUM EE

Lucy's Warbler

Dec. 30 Monterey Peninsula College, MTY MPRBA

Palu Warbler

Dec. 30 Pebble Beach, MTY MPRBA

Jan. 1 Packard Ranch, MTY DSh, PJM

Dec. 28- San Lorenzo MTL
Jan. 2 (1-2) Park, SCZ

Jan. 18 Arana Gulch Open Space DSu
Preserve, SCZ

Jan. 25(2) San Lorenzo River, DSu
SCZ

Jan. 26 (2) Arcata, HUM EE
Jan. 28 Presidio, SF ASH

Black-and-White Warbler

Dec. 30 Pacific Grove, MTY MPRBA
Jan. 5 Merced Falls, MER PJM

Jan. 18 Santa Cruz, SCZ DSu

American Redstart

Dec. 30 Coyote Creek MM, BRe

Jan. 2 Trail, SCL MR

Jan. 16 Bay Farm Island, DQ, LT, JR
(from ALA)

Dec. 17 Milpitas, SCL RL

Abbreviations for Observers: ABB, Arcata Bird Box; JAn, Jan Anderson; SAS, Shan Aquilar-Stone; JA, Jim Armstrong; SB, Steve Bauer; BB, Bill Bousman; TC, Tom Condit; CC, Coston Charles HC, Hugh Cotter; JD, Jeff Davis; AD, Al De Martini; CD, Carol Donohoe; AE, Al Eisner; EE, Elias Elias; MEZ, Mike Ezekiel; RF, Rich Ferrick; RFo, Rick Fournier; LF, Lillian Fujii; SGe, Steve Gerow; JG, James Gilroy; SG, Steve Glover; TG, Tom Grey; DaH, David Hamilton; DH, Denise Hamilton; JH, Jean Harrison; LH, Laird Henkel; DH, Darren Holstein; ASH, Alan Hopkins; BJ, Bob Juhl; JK, Jon King; PLT, Peter La Tourrette; ML, Michele Liapes; RL, Randy Little; CL, Calvin Lou; AIM, Mike Mammoser; MOB, Many Observers; KM, Kevin McKereghan; PJM, Peter J. Metropulos; MPRBA, Monterey Peninsula Rare Bird Alert; CN, Christie Nelson; DNo, Dick Norton; LP, Larry Parmeter; DQ, Dave Quady; BR, Bob Ramer; BRe, Bob Reiling; JR, Jean Richmond; MR, Mike Rogers; PS, Paul Saraceni; BS, Bill Scoggins; GS, George Shanu; DS, Doug Shaw; DLSh, Debra Love Shearwater; DSh, Dave Shuford; KS, Kendric Smith; JS, John Sterling; DSu, David Suddjian; ST, Scott Terrill; RSTh, Ron S. Thorn; MTL, Monte Tudor-Long; LT, Larry Tunstall; BW, Brian Walton; JW, Jerry White; JW, Jay Withgott; RW, Wolfe Roger; JY, Yurchenco James.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CBRC, California Bird Records Committee; CBC, Christmas Bird Count; COL, Colusa; CC, Contra Costa; DN, Del Norte; GGP, Golden Gate Park; HUM, Humboldt; KIN, Kings; LAK, Lake; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MER, Merced; MTY, Monterey NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SON, Sonoma; YOL, Yolo.

Williamson's Sapsucker at Willow Creek, HUM, Dec. 30 (ABB), and a Red-naped Sapsucker in Cutten, HUM, Dec. 31 (ABB). The Eastern Phoebe first found in late November remained at Merced NWR, MER, Dec. 29 (PJM), while another continued at the Big Sur River mouth, MTY, Jan. 21 (MPRBA), and a third was identified at the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse, Jan. 15 (DLSh). A pair of Vermilion Flycatchers must have been a pleasant surprise at the Lenore Sportsmen's Club, KIN, Jan. 21 (LP). One San Francisco Tropical Kingbird continued to shuttle between the Buffalo Paddock, GGP, SF, and Middle Lake, SF Ft. Mason, SF, from Dec. 31-Jan. 28 (RF, CL, RSTh, MOB). A second Tropical Kingbird appeared in SF, at Ft. Mason, Jan. 8 (JA). One other Tropical Kingbird was found at Harkins Slough, MTY, Jan. 1-7 (fide BR, PJM, DSh). The **Thick-billed Kingbird** (*Tyrannus crassirostris*) that returned to Ocean Colony, Half Moon Bay, SM, on Dec. 10 continued there Jan. 2-8 (PJM, DSh, KS). A Northern Shrike was discovered off Hwy. 5 on Emmett Rd., YOL, Jan. 17 (DH), and 2-3 Clark's Nutcrackers were again seen on Mt. St. Helena, NAP, Jan. 5 (DS).

The **Black-backed Wagtail** (*Motacilla lugens*) that arrived Dec. 18 continued at Alviso, SCL, until at least Jan. 2 (ST, MR, BRe). Unusual Wood

Warblers were slightly increased over the last period (see Chart). Two early but common warblers were an Orange-crowned Warbler at Alviso, SCL, Jan. 2 (MR, ST), and a Yellow Warbler at L. Merced, SF, Jan. 1 (ML).

Sparrows to Orioles.

A single Vesper Sparrow was at the Palo Alto Flood Control Basin, SCL, Jan. 5 (CC). Unusual on the coast was a Sage Sparrow at Henry Coe SP, SCL, Jan. 29 (JY). A Lark Bunting was seen on Peckham Rd., MTY, Jan. 1-2 (fide BR, PJM, DSh). Eight Swamp Sparrows were reported over HUM, MTY, and SCZ counties, and more than 25 reports of White-throated Sparrows were received from CC, HUM, LAK, MTY, SF, and SCZ counties. The most unusual sparrow was a Harris's Sparrow identified in Cotati, SON, Jan. 5 (DS).

A McCown's Longspur was found on Browning Rd., YOL/COL, Jan. 21 (JS), and 10 Lapland Longspurs were seen at Arcata, HUM, Jan. 27 (ABB). Three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported over the period: at Garberville, HUM, Jan. 1-10 (ABB), at Trinidad, HUM, Jan. 1-16 (EE, ABB), and in Santa Cruz, SCZ, Jan. 10 (fide DSu). A Great-tailed Grackle was at the UCSC Arboretum, SCZ, Jan. 3 (JG), another was over Llagas Creek, SCZ, Jan. 2 (DSu), and others were again

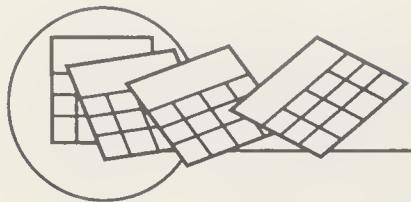
seen at Roberts Lake, Seaside, MTY, the week of Jan. 21 (MPRBA).

Last, but not least, to grace the winter scene was an Orchard Oriole at Pine Lake, SF, Jan. 1 (DM).

63 Brown Pelicans, which are night roosters at the Alameda National Wildlife Preserve, were spotted during the Oakland 2000 CBC.



Mark Eaton



March Meeting

Midway Atoll Wildlife Refuge

Explore the life and times of Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge with Helen McKenna and Allan Ridley. A week-long stay in March 2000 provided the opportunity to bike the length and breadth of Sand Island, to dive the reef encircling the 24 square mile turquoise lagoon, and to enjoy the cuisine at the 4-star French restaurant, prepared from the island's hydroponically grown organic produce and abundant local seafood.

Aptly named for its strategic location at the NW end of the Hawaiian Island chain, 2,800 miles west of San Francisco and 2,200 miles east of Japan, Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge occupies what was once the bustling Naval Air Station Midway. Today, among the remnant

hangars and barracks refurbished for ecotourism, nest over a million Laysan and black-footed albatross along with Bonin petrels, wedge-tailed shearwaters, red-tailed tropicbirds, red-footed boobies and great frigatebirds.

A slide talk by Helen and Allan will introduce you to this unique environment, its bird life and other animals: the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, threatened Pacific green sea turtle and delightful Hawaiian spinner dolphin. A mecca for scuba divers curious about the historic wrecks from the battle of Midway, to birdwatchers and to eco-activist volunteers who help maintain the refuge, Midway Atoll is a "far-out" place to visit—in every sense of the word.

*Thursday, March 15, 2001
7:00 p.m. Refreshments/Doors Open
7:30 p.m. Program
Randall Museum*

199 Museum Way, San Francisco (off Roosevelt Way, accessible from either 14th or 17th Streets)

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Observations

Collin G. Murphy, Ph.D. 510-845-2565
GGAS Webmaster

Mark Eaton – mweaton@pacbell.net
Northern California Bird Box
415-681-7422

Editor

Peter Caldwell 415-821-0212,
Peter_Caldwell@attglobal.net

Copy Editor
Ann Howard

Executive Director
Arthur Feinstein 510-843-2222

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Golden Gate Audubon Society
2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, CA 94702
Phone: (510) 843-2222
Fax: (510) 843-5351

Office Hours:
Tuesday – Friday 9-12, 1-4 (please call first)

Website: www.goldengateaudubon.org
e-mail: ggas@compuserve.com

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